

Draft Resolutions Ready Before Tonkin Incidents

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 21.—The Senate Foreign Relations Committee made public today testimony confirming that the Administration prepared contingent drafts of the Southeast Asia Resolution before attacks by North Vietnamese torpedo boats on American destroyers in August, 1964.

It was these attacks in the Gulf of Tonkin—the first on Aug. 2 and the second on Aug. 4—that led President Johnson to send to Congress a resolution calling on him to take "all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression."

Disclosure that the drafts of the resolution, commonly called the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, had been prepared before the attacks came with the publication of exchanges between Senator J. W. Fulbright, the committee chairman, and William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs, in a closed hearing on Sept. 20, 1966, more than two years after approval of the resolution.

Torpedo Wake Is Cited

Meanwhile, the Defense Department said that the wake of a torpedo fired by what is said was a North Vietnamese patrol boat was observed by the crew of a United States destroyer in the Aug. 4, 1964, encounter in the gulf.

The sighting of the torpedo wake by four crew members of the destroyer Turner Joy that night is regarded by Defense Department officials as conclusive evidence that two destroyers came under attack by North Vietnamese craft.

The Pentagon evidence, Congressional sources said, was recently presented in a still-unpublished report to the Foreign Relations Committee, some of whose members are skeptical that the American destroyers were actually attacked, as the Administration contends.

It was explained on Capitol Hill that a decision to declassify the Fullbright-Bundy testimony was taken jointly by the committee and the State Department as a result of numerous inquiries prompted by disclosure of the substance of Mr. Bundy's testimony in The New York Times on Nov. 19 and Nov. 25.

The exchanges made public today show that Mr. Bundy was asked by Mr. Fulbright whether he had anything to do with the preparation of the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. He replied, "We had contingent drafts, which, however, did not very closely resemble the [actual] draft, for some time prior" to August, 1964.

Mr. Bundy said that this was "a matter of normal contingencies planning" and that "no serious thought had been given to it, to the best of my knowledge, prior to the Gulf of Tonkin."

Mr. Bundy acknowledged that he had prepared a resolution and went on:

"We had always anticipated, and as a matter of common prudence, I think, should have anticipated, the possibility that things might take a more drastic turn at any time and that it would be wise to seek an affirmation of the desires

of and intent of the Congress. But that is normal planning. I am not sure that my drafts were even known to others."

The Tonkin resolution was voted in the House by 416 to 0, and in the Senate by 88 to 2, with only Democratic Senators Wayne L. Morse of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska dissenting. Several Senators expressed concern during the two-day debate, however, that Congress was giving the President a "blank check."

During the debate Senator Morse charged that the attack was the result of "an act of provocation" by the United States.

Informal Study Opened

Referring to news dispatches from Saigon, which had been confirmed during closed meetings of the Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Morse said that on July 31, South Vietnamese patrol boats had shelled the North Vietnamese islands of Hon Me and Hon Ngoo, that during this attack American destroyers "were in the general area," and that "they were not 60 to 65 miles away" from the islands as Defense officials contended.

In an informal inquiry being conducted by some member of the Foreign Relations Commit-

tee into the Tonkin incident, there is general agreement that the Maddox came under attack on Aug. 2, 1964. This incident took place in daylight. But there is some doubt that the Maddox and Turner Joy were actually attacked in the second incident, which took place during a moonless night.

No Question, Pentagon Says

High-ranking Defense officials acknowledge that it is impossible to sort out in complete detail what happened during the confused, six-hour encounter. But they insist that on the basis of the evidence

that there can be no question that the two destroyers came under torpedo attack on Aug. 4.

In part, this conclusion rests on such circumstantial evidence as the sighting of a North Vietnamese torpedo boat by both radar and navy planes flying overhead. But the conclusion that an attack took place largely on the sighting of the torpedo wake and "numerous" sonar detections of torpedoes fired at the destroyers.

A Pentagon spokesman acknowledged that some of the initial reports of incoming torpedoes undoubtedly were cr-

teritious. But he contended that the sighting of the wake of one torpedo, which had already been spotted on sonar, provided direct and conclusive evidence that at least one torpedo had been fired.

Detecte by Sonar

The torpedo, according to the Pentagon report to the Senate committee, was first spotted by Sonarman 3d cl. David E. Mallow, who was manning the sonar aboard the Maddox. The range and bearing of the torpedo, as tracked by sonar, was relayed by radio to the Turner Joy.

The wake of the torpedo, as seen from astern to bow, some 300 feet off the port side of the Turner Joy, according to the Pentagon report, was seen by four crew members on lookout aboard the destroyer.

According to a Pentagon spokesman, four members of the Turner Joy have provided affidavits that they sighted the torpedo wake.

They were identified as Lt. (jg) John J. Barry, forward gun director officer; Seaman Edward R. Sentel, port lookout; Seaman Larry O. Litton, in the forward gun director, and

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In recent months, several Senators in both parties have indicated doubts that the attacks were "unprovoked."

Suspicions Increased

They have also indicated suspicions that the Administration had already decided to increase United States forces in South Vietnam and used the incident as justification for implementing this decision.

In part, this suspicion was based on the basis of the evidence

ficials that President Johnson had carried a draft of the resolution in his pocket for some time before the attack.

The suspicion was reinforced by the testimony of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara before a closed joint meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committee on Aug. 6, 1964, which was not released until Nov. 24, 1966.

Mr. McNamara, in urging support of the Tonkin Resolution, said the President had already ordered these military deployments as a result of

... group from the Pacific Coast to the Western Pacific; movement of interceptor and fighter-bomber aircraft into South Vietnam; movement of fighter-bomber aircraft into Thailand; transfer of interceptor and fighter-bomber squadrons from the United States to advance bases in the Pacific; movement of an antisubmarine force into the South China Sea, and the alerting and preparing for movement of selected Army and Marine forces.

One Senate staff member expressed doubt today that the full truth would ever be discovered.